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The sea is calm to-night.  
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
 Upon the straits.—on the French coast the light  
 Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,  
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

—*Dover Beach.*

The sandy spits, the shore-lock'd lakes,  
 Melt into open moonlit sea;  
 The soft Mediterranean breaks  
 At my feet, free.

Dotting the fields of corn and vine,  
 Like ghosts, the huge, gnarl'd olives stand.  
 Behind, that lovely mountain-line!  
 While, by the strand,

Cette, with its glistening houses white,  
 Curves with the curving beach away  
 To where the lighthouse beacons bright  
 Far in the bay.

—*A Southern Night.*

FERRIS LOCKWOOD.

## V.

### THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CHARITIES AND CORRECTIONS.

It is something noteworthy, even in these altruistic times of ours, to find four hundred busy men and women coming together from thousands of miles apart to spend a week in conference upon the most practical questions of social science. If "morality fused with social devotion" is, as has been said, "the most consummate flower of our civilization," that flower was seen in fullest bloom in Buffalo during the first and second weeks of July.

It was remarked by one of the speakers in this conference that were an ancient Greek of the time of Plato to come to life among us, no chemical marvel would so astonish him as would Laura Bridgman. Physical science, with all its progress, has effected nothing so marvelous as the moral and intellectual miracles which have been wrought by Christian philanthropy in the last two generations.

It is often said that conferences like this, being entirely without legislative or judicial power, are a vain show, a waste of words and feeling with no result worth mentioning. No error could be greater. The educating and illuminating power of such a congress is great. A noticeable impulse to legislation was given by the thirteenth conference, held in Washington in 1886, and Johns Hopkins University felt its influence so far as to establish a lectureship on Charity Organization and kindred topics. The men and women who gather in these conferences are not mere theorists, nor are they simply officials of public institutions of small culture and narrow intellect. The majority of them are actual workers in charity or in penology, who are giving thorough study, not only to their own special topics, but to all kindred subjects, investigating social questions in a spirit entirely scientific as well as human.

No philanthropy, indeed, as was observed at one of the meetings, is truly humane and not scientific, as none is truly scientific and not humane. That physician of repute who said of idiots, "I would kill them all off," was no less unsci-

entific than inhumane. Science forbids all waste, even the wasted powers of an idiot. Institutions there are which have educated the feeble-minded : what is most needed now is an institution which shall educate the public. This is the especial function of the Conference of Charities and Correction.

Briefly, the results of the conference were, to diagnose the moral disease of the delinquent child and to find the best remedy in manual training; to condemn, from the logic of experience, the subsidizing of sectarian institutions; to show, by facts most scientifically collated, that public relief tends always to perpetuate misery and degradation; to pronounce emphatically against all admixture of politics in penology; to insist upon labor for all convicts; to emphasize the importance of the social idea in reformation of the criminal; to show the value of charity organization as a means of the diffusion of intelligence, and of bringing large numbers of prosperous people into efficient service of the poor, and to bring out into prominence the duty of private citizens, of the church, and of the public press with regard to the great problem of the uplifting and regeneration of humanity.

LOUISE SEYMOUR HOUGHTON.

## VI.

### PHILOLOGICAL PUZZLES.

In the June number of the REVIEW, on page 709, in a communication on the subject of philological curiosities, Mr. E. M. Day refers to *lagniappe* as a word used in New Orleans, and nowhere else, to express a gratuity given by a store-keeper to a child or negro upon a purchase made, and to *brottus* as having the same meaning and use in Savannah, Georgia.

It may interest your readers to learn that in both Peru and Chili the words *la llapa* are used in the same sense, and it would seem that, even if *lagniappe* be not a corruption of *la llapa*, both have the same root.

With regard to *brottus*, it is possibly a corruption from the French *barroter*, "to fill up (a ship) to the beams," and hence "to add something." In this connection I may add that the word used in Mexico, in the same sense as *la llapa*, is *pilon*, and that one of the primary meanings of this word is "heap."

C. W. GOODCHILD.

## VII.

### THE USE AND USELESSNESS OF TORPEDOES.

In an article on the late British naval manœuvres in England and the lessons they teach, *Blackwood's Magazine* has some pregnant suggestions on the question of defensive torpedoes or submarine mines. The remarks of the writer, evidently a professional man, have no less bearing on American interests. As the question of coast defense is one of paramount interest, and recent events have brought that interest specially to the front, it is well to consider the matter briefly. Firstly, let us quote the Blackwood writer :

"These mines (speaking of defensive torpedoes) are cheap to buy, but, if war broke out suddenly, would be difficult to get in sufficient quantities. Peace-time is obviously the time to make all preparations, and for such cities as Liverpool and Glasgow to put their house in order by getting a sufficient number of these torpedoes, and some one to keep them in order and put them down in time, the worthy citizens might then, on war being declared, feel pretty secure in their beds from attacks by hostile cruisers. A certain amount of practice in laying down these torpedoes and taking them up again is essential for doing it quickly and properly when the time arrives to repel the enemy. The Royal Engineers are sup-